

Message Text

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SUBJECT: LAGOS TRADE FAIR: DIGITAL EQUIPMENT CORP.

REF: (A) LAGOS 6272; (B) USDOC 10500

1. OUR INQUIRY TO EARTH SCIENCES LTD. BEHALF DIGITAL ELICITED
FIVE-PAGE REPLY FROM DON. OBOT ETIEBET. BASIC POINTS ARE:

A. EARTH SCIENCES IS DIGITAL'S NIGERIAN REP AND HOPES SOON
SIGN DISTRIBUTORSHIP AGREEMENT. ETIEBET WILL VISIT DIGITAL AT
MAYNARD, MASS., END JUNE AND GIVE DETAILED REPORT.

B. MARKET SIZE: PRESENTLY, COMPUTERS POSSESSED BY SIX
UNIVERSITIES, THREE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT MINISTRIES AND POSSIBLY HALF
A DOZEN BANKS AND INSURANCE COMPANIES. COMPUTER SALES 1976 ESTIMATED
AT NAIRA 5 MILLION OR ABOUT DOLS 8 MILLION. MARKET WILL GROW ABOUT
50 PER CENT ANNUALLY NEXT THREE YEARS, THEN TAKE OFF. ETIEBET CALLS
MARKET QTE ENORMOUS UNQTE. ALL SALES ARE AND FOR NEXT FEW YEARS AT
LEAST WILL BE IMPORTS.

C. TREND: OBVIOUSLY UPWARD BUT PACE DEPENDS ON END-
USER ORIENTATION AND TRAINING IN USES PLUS, OF COURSE, AFTER-
SALES SUPPORT. COMPUTERS STILL VERY NEW. ETIEBET PREDICTS
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TREND WILL BE AWAY FROM LARGE TOWARD MEDIUM AND SMALL (MINI)
COMPUTERS FOR REASONS GIVEN REF A. MAINFRAME USERS FINDING THEM
TOO EXPENSIVE AND TOO LARGE FOR PRESENT NEEDS AND FOR COUNTRY'S
SKILLED MANPOWER AND INFRASTRUCTURE LEVELS. POOR TELECOMMUNI-
CATIONS EFFECTIVELY PREVENT REMOTE COMPUTER OPERATIONS. CURRENT
DEVELOPMENT PLAN AIMS AT TREMENDOUS EXPANSION SCOPE AND QUALITY
TELECOMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM BUT RELIABLE SERVICE SEEMS YEARS AWAY.

D. END-USERS: UNIVERSITIES SEEM BEST ACQUAINTED WITH COMPUTERS. THERE ARE 13 UNIVERSITIES NOW AND SIX MORE PLANNED. FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAS SOME COMPUTERS AND CAN EVENTUALLY USE MANY MORE. LONG RUN PRIVATE SECTOR POTENTIAL IN THOUSANDS FOR MINI-COMPUTERS. THE 19 STATE GOVERNMENTS ARE TOTALLY UNTAPPED MARKET. COMPUTERS NECESSARY FOR LARGE INDUSTRIAL PROJECTS IN CURRENT DEVELOPMENT PLAN, I.E., STEEL MILLS, FERTILIZER, PAPER AND CEMENT PLANTS, REFINERIES, PIPELINES, ETC. ETIEBET REPORTS THAT FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S CENTRAL PLANNING OFFICE IS TO CONDUCT STUDY OF APPLICABILITY, SUITABILITY AND UTILIZATION OF EXISTING COMPUTER INSTALLATIONS TO FORMULATE GOVERNMENT COMPUTER POLICY. HE CERTAIN STUDY WILL FAVOR PACKAGED MINI-COMPUTER SYSTEMS.

E. IN SHORT, MARKET POTENTIAL IS COMMENSURATE WITH NIGERIA'S ECONOMIC SIZE AND POPULATION BUT COMPUTER USAGE IN INFACY AND NEEDS NOURISHING.

2. ACTION REQUESTED: (1) PROVIDE ABOVE TO DIGITAL. FYI WHILE WE WILL DRAW ON ETIEBET'S REPORT IN FUTURE WE CONSIDER IT ESSENTIALLY PROPRIETARY AND WILL NOT PROVIDE TO OTHER COMPUTER FIRMS END FYI. ETIEBET'S VIEWS CONFORM TO THOSE OF OTHER SOURCES. (2) TO AID FUTURE MARKET RESEARCH THIS FIELD, WOULD APPRECIATE BEING PROVIDED WITH EXISTING USDOC MARKETING PUBLICATIONS, IN TARGET INDUSTRIES SERIES FOR EXAMPLE. INCLUDE WORLD-WIDE COMPUTER MARKET STUDY DONE SEVERAL YEARS AGO. EASUM

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